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Mr. Basheer Ahmad Sayeed :—" In the answer to question No. 485 it is stated that the ex-service men were not debarred but a restriction was imposed and that that restriction applied only to members of the Indian Army. While the pledge was given to both the combatants and non-combatants, the restriction is made to apply only to men of the Indian Army. I wish to know why."

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I am sorry that I have not got the papers with me and must ask for notice. But if the hon. Member refers to why non-combatants were excluded, that was done, I think, after the concession had been in force for three years."

Mr. Basheer Ahmad Sayeed :—" May I read, Sir, the statement in answer to question No. 485? 'The subsequent order . . . did not debar ex-service men from getting the concession relating to the grant of the land but only restricted the concession to those officers and men of the Indian Army who were recruited before the Armistice to the combatant ranks of the Army.' I wish to know, Sir, why this distinction was made between the officers and men of the Indian Army and the non-combatants and whether any such distinction was sought to be made at the time when the pledge was given."

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" The concession was in force for three years. Subsequently it was extended and when the period was extended, the extension was made in favour of combatant men."

Mr. Basheer Ahmad Sayeed :—" I wish to know why such a distinction which was not contained in the pledge was made."

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" The distinction is obvious. The Government thought that combatant people were more deserving than non-combatants."

Proceedings of the recent Collectors' Conference.

*511 Q.—Mr. D. Narayana Raju: Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) what is the total cost incurred for the recent Collectors' Conference; and

(*b*) whether the Government will be pleased to place on the table of the House a full report of the proceedings of the conference including the pros and cons discussed and the conclusions arrived at on the several questions taken up for consideration?

A.—(*a*) The cost consisted of the travelling allowances of those officers who attended. The exact figures have not been compiled; approximately the total is about Rs. 2,650.

(*b*) The hon. Member is referred to the answer to question No. 8 108 put by Mr. Ramachandra Reddi. The proceedings were not reported.

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" May I know, Sir, whether the Collectors' Conference was intended merely as a passing show and not considered important enough to make a report of its proceedings?"

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" That is a matter of opinion, Sir."

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Mr. P. Anjaneyulu :—" May I know whether the Collectors' Conference is held yearly or only occasionally ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" It is not being held every year, Sir. Whenever the Government find that there are a considerable number of questions on which it would be useful to have discussion, the conference is held. It has been held annually only for the last three years."

Mr. P. Anjaneyulu :—" May I know whether it is intended to give instructions to or get information from the Collectors or whether it also concerns the public at large : and if it includes the public, whether it will not be well for the Government to let the public know of the proceedings at the conference ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" It does not include the public."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" May I know if the conference does not discuss public questions ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I do not know what the hon Member means by ' public questions '. All Government questions are public in a sense."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" If that is so, Sir, may I know whether it is not necessary that the proceedings of a responsible body like that should be reported to the Government ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" The conference consists of a discussion between the Members of Government and the Collectors and I do not understand why the proceedings should be reported to Government."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" May I know whether any proceedings of the conference are committed to paper at all ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" No, Sir "

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" Therefore, it is an informal conference where Collectors come together, have a talk, come to no decision and get away from the place. Is that so, Sir ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I think I have answered this twice at least before and I would only refer the hon. Member to the answers given on previous occasions."

Public Service

Prohibition of Government servants from contributing to the All-India Khadi Fund.

* 512 Q.—Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have prohibited Government servants from contributing to the All-India Khadi Fund ;